

Tui Motu

InterIslands

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preaching amazing grace

“The survival of our planet demands nothing less than the abolition of war.” This is the radical ultimatum that Canon Paul Oestreicher put to the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston, Jamaica in May. (We gratefully reprint the text of his speech over two issues.)

And at so many levels, this statement is playing itself out. The financing of war through debt has plunged the United States into its present nightmare economic conundrum. The ideological appeal to violence and its indiscriminate use in places that have rightly prided themselves on their peacefulness, e.g. Norway, and the massacres of Anders Behring Breivik, have shocked the world. Again, look at the uncontrollable way in which first world governments pressure governments in third world countries to buy arms, thus fostering civil wars where the arms end up being used against their own people. The military-industrial complex rules.

These are a tiny handful of many inter-twined situations that only strengthen this powerful *cri de coeur*.

Canon Paul uses the person of

William Wilberforce to parallel real possibilities for peace. Wilberforce was an ‘amazing grace’ who, over a lifetime of strenuous advocacy, was able to change an entrenched international viewpoint and have slavery abolished.

How do we grow a generation of William Wilberforces to ensure the complete overturning of war? How do we make war illegal, not just in principle, but in fact? How are the many existing international laws of peace and peace-making to be enforced? Certainly the use of armed forces in peace-keeping roles is defining one tiny step on this path to abolition of war. Education at all levels of society is another. Jesus’ call to all-embracing love of enemies remains to be fulfilled. May Canon Paul’s voice continue to raise Jesus’ cry — and unsettle us to work for the total abolition of war.

There is another amazing grace to be found in Brother Kieran Fenn’s portrayal of what he calls a ‘Marial’ church: the development of a church more humble and more participative, wearing the face of Mary of the

Visitation. He says that we have not developed the renewed way that the second Vatican Council portrayed the person of the mother of Jesus.

Mary is truly our sister, who struggled to understand her son and who came to full understanding of him only after his resurrection from the dead. The Acts of the Apostles show her participating so closely in the earliest days of the post-resurrection church that she has become known as mother of the Church — associating that humble face of Mary of which Brother Kieran writes with his vision of a more humble Church. Father Pat Maloney, peeping at the future, has a similar hope for a “...church less centralized in Rome, a church less focused on power and more on service, a church with real authority returned to diocesan bishops, a Church in which the baptismal gifts of all are recognized.”

These two articles put a prophetic and hope-filled view of a renewed Church, with which many readers will identify. Mary, mother of the Church, pray for us. ■

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front cover illustration: Donald Moorhead

winter warmth

Perhaps we can thank the weather! After all, the forecasters and reporters have been waxing lyrically on the heaviest snowfalls, the largest number of lightning strikes, the wildest winds and giant sea swells.... Perhaps in winter we all like to hunker down a little more often with some good reading matter. Whatever the reason, we at *Tui Motu* have been encouraged over the last month or two by warm comments from readers new and old. We'll share just a few samples.

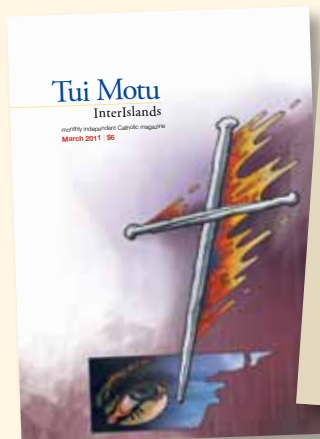
"Last year when working in Christchurch... I came across and secured a copy of your excellent magazine Tui Motu. I congratulate you and staff for such a fine production. The Catholic community urgently needs such a magazine which is open to exploring different perspectives on the Christian story."

— 27 June, from an Australian educator, trainer and consultant.

"The Tui Motu issue arrived and the article is really stunning. In fact, the whole magazine is quite stunning. It's how our own Catholic paper used to be in better days.....and better than that, even!"

— 5 July from a North American contributor to the magazine

"Please find enclosed a cheque in payment for the next issues of your excellent



magazine. May God bless the work."

— 1 July from a new subscriber in New Zealand

"I assure you I am most certainly re-subscribing and eagerly await being reunited with Tui Motu, for which I have a great affection, as a publication which is not, as some Catholic publications are, an insult to the intelligence."

—13 July from an Australian subscriber

We were further reminded of the overall excellence of the magazine when we were asked to return to Australia the Gutenberg Trophy which *Tui Motu* has held for the past year. This was awarded for general excellence in religious journalism.

It is always great to be appreciated. But appreciation in itself is not enough to keep *Tui Motu* flourishing. For that we need subscribers.

So we seek your help in introducing this highly praised magazine to your friends and family and parish. If every reader could enlist one more subscriber, the longer term future of *Tui Motu* would be secured. It sounds so simple when put in those terms. So perhaps each of us could take up the challenge as a winter-time project? Let's use the praise received to encourage others to try *Tui Motu* while the nights are still long enough to encourage extra reading.

Then in the spring we can thank the weather not only for appreciative words but for new and appreciative subscribers. ■

*Elizabeth Mackie OP, Interim Chair,
Tui Motu Board*



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Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed.

The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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Fracking

Nicky Chapman is 'on the button' with her challenge to take seriously the environmental impacts of proposed energy exploration in New Zealand. While she focuses on lignite mining in Southland, other exploitative mining is also planned for NZ. Having recently returned from New York where FRACKING — hydraulic fracturing — is making headlines at all levels, I was deeply concerned to learn in our media that the petrochemical industry is preparing to unleash this highly exploitative process here. Fracking is likely to be sold to citizens as an act of patriotism — for the future economic growth and good of the country, and as a way of providing employment, especially in low-income communities. While the petrochemical industry and, no doubt, government, will promise a bright future concerning the perceived reservoirs of natural gas trapped in underground shale strata, citizens will be duped into believing that extraction is safe and straightforward. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The drilling necessary to reach the gas pockets pierces fresh water aquifers. Toxic chemicals, part of the extractive process, frequently leak into other substrata including the water aquifers. Fracking has become a moral issue. There is nothing more basic than water. Its abuse and contamination, in addition to the destruction and degradation of our

eco-system, should energize us into action. As citizens, consumers and those called to reverence creation, fracking needs to enter our personal and communal lexicons. We must protest against proposed shale gas fracking. Indeed, we need to talk and act! (www.frackaction.com)

Jacqui Ryan OP, Auckland

Carbon dioxide

With regard to the article *Democracy, climate change and southland lignite* by Nicky Chapman (TM, July), I am saddened to see once again the buy in to the man-made climate change and Green House gas theory.

CO₂ is an essential part of life on the planet and not a toxic gas that's going to kill us all, as the mainstream media and lobbyists are pushing so hard to make everyone believe. This now includes scare tactics in the schools from an early age.

All we hear, whenever anyone challenges the issue is "there is an overwhelming consensus from scientists that CO₂ is causing" etc. This is just not true. The truth is that there are many scientists firmly opposed to what is now proven to be a fraud. Climate change is natural, driven mostly by the sun, always has been and always will be. Study history and you will see this. Any scientist who tries to speak out is silenced. They are not allowed to be heard on TV or in the press. See www.friendsofscience.org if you want to see the other side of the debate. (If you cannot get into

letters to the editor

We welcome comment, discussion, argument, debate. But please keep letters under 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge, while not changing the meaning. Response articles (up to a page) are welcome — but please, by negotiation.

the site, it's because this now has also been silenced.)

The CO₂ issue is a geo political control tool and an essential part of the new world order globalisation plan. The forces at work are genocidal. Watch Bill Gates presentation at the last TED conference as just one example of where this is all heading (see youtube).

While they talk about the green house effect, the same powers are geo-engineering the atmosphere with chem-trailing, a process where clouds are formed by spraying barium and aluminum sulphites into the atmosphere, they don't show this on CNN or BBC. (See <http://www.thebiggestsecret.org/home/index.php/articles/34-nwo-general/129-chemtrails-best-evidence>)

No one can deny that there is a big pollution problem in the world, but that is a completely different issue.

David Sale, Canterbury

A prayer of a modern English mystic fits as the whole world struggles with the Anders Behring Breivik massacre in Norway...

God and Father of all human beings, in your love you have made all the nations of the world to be one family

Help those of different races and religions to love and understand one another better.

Take away hatred, jealousy and prejudice,

So that loving you more deeply we may work together for the coming of your kingdom of righteousness and peace.

We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen

Evelyn Underhill

come you masters of war

Ron Sharp

The most passionate Catholic peace conscience-raiser of our time was the Trappist monk, Thomas Merton (1915–69). He spent his years of reflective silence trumpeting peace through 40 books and many articles in Catholic papers. Merton held that the root of all wars is fear — not only of other people but even of ourselves, who can be easily led into convincing ourselves that “God is on our side.”

In the first four centuries the Christian communities took Jesus’s “Love your enemies” seriously. Origen’s writings opposing Christian involvement in war became the official position of the Church — with support from Clement of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, St. Cyprian, and Tertullian, who said that when Jesus took away Peter’s sword, he disarmed every soldier. This position was backed up by Christian action, as the non-Christian, Celsus, makes clear in his complaint: “Because he perversely refuses to fight, everyone else is threatened with destruction.”

In the century and a half between Origen and Augustine, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire and in 411 the Goths marched on Rome and soon the Vandals were at the gates of Hippo, Augustine’s bishopric. This brought Augustine — former Origenist — to develop the new Just War Theory. Augustine made the distinction between the intention in the Christian’s mind and the external deed that could lead to violence. Violence is sanctioned through purity of intention.

Of course, for centuries ever since, we have heard kings and presidents, prime ministers and priests urging men to take up arms out of love and mercifully slay their enemies without a

Come you masters of war
You that build all the guns
You that build the death planes
You that build the big bombs
You that hide behind walls
You that hide behind desks
I just want you to know
I can see through your masks.
You fasten the triggers
For the others to fire
Then you sit back and watch
When the death count gets higher
You hide in your mansion
As young people’s blood
Flows out of their bodies
And is buried in the mud.

– Bob Dylan 1963

word about purifying their intentions.

Since then our world has experienced horrific wars in the Americas, Russia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa *et alia*. We have experienced nuclear holocausts, chemical defoliation, ethnic cleansings and brutal abuses of powers and, above all, mass civilian murderings. We have also seen majestic individual responses from Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Mohandas Gandhi, with their approach of non-violent resistance; and from Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Franz Jagerstatter, who were murdered for refusing to take up arms with the German Armies. Here in New Zealand Archibald Baxter and the founding members of the Nelson Riverside Community, still a beacon of peace, were imprisoned for their

conscientious objection to war.

Finally, in 1944, before the H-bomb, and after all the years of devastation under the just war theory, Cardinal Ottaviani said “Modern wars can never fulfill the conditions which govern a just and lawful war.” Pope Pius XII, followed this up when he asserted that “the theory of war as an apt and proportionate means of solving international conflicts is now out of date.” Good Pope John came out even strongly than his predecessors when he said: “Therefore, in this age of ours, which prides itself on its atomic power, it is irrational to believe that war is still an apt means of vindicating violated rights.” The Second Vatican Council clearly allows the Christian’s right to refuse bearing arms for reasons of conscience.

So is the Holy Spirit leading us humans slowly but surely into an age of settling conflicts by reason and arbitration? Are we humans growing out of our violent mindset?

Why do the few lay stalwarts of Pax Christi in our Church of Aotearoa and throughout the world find it so hard to be heard in these times when war should be outlawed? At least, the perpetrators of atrocities are being brought before international law courts.

Thomas Merton challenges us: “If the task of building a peaceful world is the most important task of our time, it is also the most difficult. It will require far more discipline, sacrifice, planning, thought, cooperation and heroism than war ever demanded.” ■

Ron Sharpe is a Motueka organic farmer with a lifelong interest in issues of peace and peace making.

a new world is possible

Paul Oestreicher

Canon Paul Oestreicher was the keynote speaker at the Opening Plenary of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation held in Kingston, Jamaica on 18 May 2011. The convocation ended the World Council of Churches' "Decade to Overcome Violence."

We reprint this memorable address in two parts.

In this first part, Canon Paul asks for a radical move away from just war theory, to stand for the unique ethical contribution of Jesus: 'love your enemies', by paralleling William Wilberforce's campaign to abolish slavery.

Wherever you come from, whatever your church tradition, you may be Orthodox or Catholic, Protestant or Charismatic, Evangelical or Liberal, Conservative or Radical, all of us have come here because we wish to be friends of Jesus, rabbi, prophet and more than a prophet. To each one of us he says: "You are my friends, if you do what I command you ... This I command you, to love one another as I have loved you." Is anyone, anywhere, excluded from that love? Here is the answer that Jesus gave to his friends: "It is said, 'you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy'; but I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

That is how the Man in whom we see the face of God spoke, lived and died. As his enemies were killing him, he prayed for them to be forgiven. Jesus was not only speaking to each of us individually, he was addressing the people of God as a holy community. The prophets of Israel spoke to their nation. Often the nation did not want to hear.

jesus speaks now

Gathered together in Kingston from all corners of the earth, Jesus speaks to us now, to us, a small cross section of his sanctified people. Do we want to hear him? Our record suggests that we do not. Most of our theologians, pastors and assemblies, Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant, have bowed down ever since the time of the Emperor Constantine in the third century,

bowed down deeply to empire and nation, rather than to the single new humanity into which we are born. We have made a pact with Caesar, with power, the very pact that the early Christians called idolatry. Because the newly converted ruler declared it to be our duty, we have squared it with our conscience to kill the Emperor's enemies, and to do this with Jesus on our lips.

Under the sign of the Cross Christian nations have conquered and massacred the children of Islam. In 1914, my German father went to war with the words 'God with Us' engraved on his belt buckle. The British soldiers, whom he was trained to kill, had no doubt that the same God was on their side.

hiroshima

When in 1945, a bomber set out, loaded with the world's first nuclear weapon, a single weapon which was about to kill one hundred thousand women and children and men in the city of Hiroshima, the aircraft's crew were sent on their way with Christian prayers. The war memorials in the cathedrals and cities of Christendom attest to the fact that we, like our brothers and sisters in Islam, regard those who have died in battle for the nation as having secured their place in heaven, and that now includes those in the coffins arriving from Afghanistan and draped in the 'sacred' Stars and Stripes.

no to collective murder

Unless we change, unless the Church

moves to the margins and becomes the alternative society that unconditionally says 'no' to war, 'no' to the collective murder that every embattled nation or tribe, every warring alliance, every violent liberation movement, every fundamentalist cause, and now the War on Terror declares to be just, until we throw this justification of war, this 'just war' theology into the dustbin of history, unless we do that, we will have thrown away the one unique ethical contribution that the teaching of Jesus could make both to the survival of humanity and to the triumph of compassion.

charter of compassion

I commend to you Karen Armstrong's highly significant Charter of Compassion. The Hindu prophet Mahatma Gandhi thought that Christianity would be a good idea — if only Christians practised it. If we were to show compassion for those whom we have good reason to fear, the new world that Jesus called the Kingdom would have come a little closer. That is within our power. Albert Schweitzer in his philosophy of civilisation simply called it: reverence for life.

This Convocation will not yet be the Universal Christian Peace Council of which Dietrich Bonhoeffer dreamed, long before Hitler's obedient servants hanged him. But we could help to pave the way to such a Council, a Council speaking with the authority of the whole Church, if, here and now in Kingston, we were ready to say: it is impossible both to love our

enemies and to kill them, it is impossible both to reverence life and to be in league with the military-industrial complex, the killing-machine that rapaciously consumes levels of wealth that are beyond our mathematical imagination.

war is the crime

War and the arms trade that feeds it cannot make life for the people on our small planet more just or more secure. It is not simply that crimes are committed by all sides in every war. War itself is the crime. Its preparation alone, globally consumes more than a hundred times the resources that could provide clean water to every child on this planet. Even before the latest perversions of science and technology are put to their lethal use, thousands of children die unnecessarily for lack of clean water.

jesus was a realist

Jesus was not an idealistic dreamer. He was and remains the ultimate realist. The survival of our planet demands nothing less than the abolition of war. Albert Einstein, the great physicist and humanist, already knew that early in the last century. He repeated it often with a clarity and credibility that few Christian pacifists have matched.

abolition of war is possible

The abolition of war is possible. It is as possible as was the abolition of slavery, the slavery that still haunts the history of this nation of Jamaica. Wilberforce and his evangelical friends who campaigned to end it, were thought to be unrealistic dreamers. Slavery surely was part of our DNA, necessary to every society's economic survival. The churches were up to their necks in maintaining slavery, the bishops of the Church of England unanimously upheld it. In the same way, many Christians are wedded to a society that cannot let go of the cult of the good soldier or even the holy warrior. Wilberforce and his determined friends triumphed against all odds. Slavery was made illegal. Its defenders



L to R: Canon Paul Oestreicher, his wife Barbara Einhorn and the Otago University Chaplain Gregory Hughson in Jamaica.

withered away. That needs to become the fate of war. If the churches of the world fail to embark on such a campaign, we will have nothing of unique significance to say on the subject of world peace.

what chance winning?

What are our chances of winning this battle? Some will say: slavery, exploitation, and trafficking in human beings still goes on. Yes, but it is universally acknowledged as both morally wrong, and illegal. Passing legislation to abolish war will not immediately eliminate armed violence. What it will do is to make absolutely clear that to resolve conflicts by military means is illegal, with its perpetrators brought before an International Court of Justice.

Will we then remain in bondage to the principalities and powers, or will we wrestle with them and thereby enter into the glorious liberty of the children of God?

example of wilberforce

This struggle, if we embrace it, will be at least as tough as that of Wilberforce. Devotion to and respect for every nation's military tradition is as undiminished in church as in state. The Roman dictum *si vis pacem, para bellum* — if you want peace, prepare for war — holds sway. It is a powerful lie. Yet those who believe it are neither stupid nor evil. History, however,

shows that if we prepare for war, war is eventually what we get. Jesus put it quite simply: Those who live by the sword, will die by the sword.

signs of spiritual maturity

Unless we learn to resolve our conflicts — and conflicts there will always be — unless we learn to resolve them without militarised violence, our children's children may no longer have a future. Love of those who threaten us, care for the welfare of those whom we fear, is not only a sign of spiritual maturity, but also of wordly wisdom. It is enlightened self-interest. Military strategists glimpsed that when, in the Cold War they spoke of common security. If my potential enemy has no reason to fear me, I am safer too.

So, it is time for the still small voices of the historic peace churches, hitherto respected but ignored, to be taken seriously. That is the main reason why, as an Anglican priest, I have also chosen to be a Quaker, a member of the Religious Society of Friends. Quaker history, often a story of suffering, witnesses to the biblical insight that love casts out fear. ■

Canon Paul Oestreicher is a former Director of the Centre for International Reconciliation at Coventry Cathedral. Paul has been a life long campaigner for peace and nuclear disarmament.

the madonna of stalingrad

Ron O'Grady

Winter 1942: German soldiers advancing on Stalingrad had been held up by a bitterly cold winter and trapped by the surrounding Soviet forces. Cut off from their supplies the Germans closed ranks and prayed for a miracle.

Among the beleaguered troops was a German doctor and clergyman named Kurt Reuber. He wrote: "Christmas week has come and gone. It has been a week of watching and waiting, of deliberate resignation and confidence. The days were filled with the noise of battle and there were many wounded to be attended to."

On Christmas Eve, a stick of Russian bombs hit the Germans' main shelter and Reuber spent the evening trying to comfort the wounded and dying soldiers. In his last letter home he wrote: "It is late now, but it is Christmas night still. And so much sadness everywhere."

Dr Reuber called on all his religious memories to help him through this dangerous time and suddenly felt urged to paint an image of the Madonna and child. Drawing on the back of a Russian map (the fold lines can be seen on the painting) he used a stick of charcoal to portray the Virgin Mary shielding the baby Jesus in her arms and sheltering him with her cloak. He wrote: "I have turned my hole in the frozen mud into a studio. The space is too small for me to be able to see the picture properly, so I climb on to a stool and look down at it from above, to get the perspective right. Everything is repeatedly knocked over, and my pencils vanish into the mud. I wish I could tell you how absorbed I have been painting my Madonna, and how much it means to me."

Despite the limitations of his situation he completed a deeply moving image of Mother Mary nursing the



infant Jesus in the shelter of her robe with their heads leaning toward each other. Reuber said that while painting, he was continually reminded of the three words of St. John: light, life, and love. (These are the three words in German on the right hand side of the painting.)

In the last days of fighting Reuber was killed. The last German plane to fly out of Stalingrad left soon after and fortunately one of the passengers remembered the painting and took it with him.

Eventually, the Stalingrad Madonna was preserved and his family gave it to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in central Berlin, where it still occupies a central place and numerous pilgrims come to stand before it in silence. Even in our darkest moments the Madonna is always with us. ■

Ron O'Grady is a minister in a Union parish in Auckland. He is the author of several books on art and human rights

the virgin of pelagonitissa

Mary Horn

The copy I painted of this ikon creates a little magic in my room. Sometimes it is dark and brooding and at other times the gold leaf glows. But if one moves to see better it fades. At other times if it catches the reflected rising sun it has a different radiance, a red gold blush.

Ikons are from the East and the earliest were before human representations began to be created. So often they seem strange to us who have become anaesthetized by the mass produced sentimental images of the 19th century. The ikon says something other than sentiment, something beyond – about deeper emotions.

The first feeling, in this Madonna and child, is one of intimacy. The mother holds the child protectively with her left hand, and then, one becomes aware of the right hand, almost clutching — a different gesture. What is this gesture about? The whole picture brings to mind the presentation in the Temple (Luke 2: 23-25). Mary is not looking at the child but gazing out into the future, a future fraught with contradictions. He is to be a light, a revelation but destined for falling, rising and opposition. Mary seems by this strong holding to want to protect her child from this, but her eyes tell another story. She sees clearly what is to come, the reality not only for Jesus her child, but for herself and us. She is looking out towards us, but not at us. This looking suggests she knows that we too must partake in the sorrow that will pierce her own soul.

The darkness that sometimes invades the painting is to be part of the journey towards God that we all make. Mary would like to protect us too, as she is protecting her child. But she knows that we all must face adversity, contradiction and pain. We see here the effect of the sword thrust into her that will also touch the whole of humanity. There is a



The Virgin of Pelagonitissa, painted by Michiel Astrapas and Entychios, working in Serbia. Right wing of the altar screen, 1316-1318 From the church of St. George, Stara Nagoricino, near Kumanova, Macedonia.

great unknown about it, so we want to move in to see better. But when we do, we lose what we just saw. We are left a little bewildered and uncertain.

And what of the child? There is the intimacy between the pair, but the child, although resting against his mother, is not looking at her. He seems to be looking up and out towards a greater mystery of which he is aware. His gaze is on God or perhaps the place whence he leapt down from the royal throne (Wisdom 18:14). There is again a pathos, as if he is wondering what this coming down would mean for him, and he seems to pick up something from his mother — her concern, her distress.

The very angle of the figure suggests the taking down of the dead Christ on Good Friday. This is no child. He seems to be already mature, a figure of wisdom, yet needing the security he is finding in the closeness of the mother. They share secrets that they are unfolding for us.

The gold background and the gold on the garments give a luminosity to the whole and add to the greater mystery we are invited to contemplate and join, by living the light and the darkness. ■

Mary Horn is a Dominican Sister and artist, who lives at Teschemakers near Oamaru.

is the catholic church faithful to mary?

Kieran Fenn

How would the Church look if it were to wear a more humble and participative face — more in accord with the way Mary was in her time? In this time of transition within the Church, how might the Church take up these possibilities and reflect Mary's face and attitudes?

a midwife generation

The new Superior General of the Marist Brothers, Emili Turu, is a much respected figure in the Union of Major Superiors General. I was privileged to hear him on the topic of Mary in the Church. It began with his asking me to read the following extract:

"I believe that a new Church is coming. It will be browner and poorer, more sensuous and feminine, less clerical and more collegial, less concerned about charity and more conscious of justice and more multilingual and polycentric than the one we know now. That Church will better reflect the diversity of God's Trinitarian life. It will be a new Church... yet it can only come with the passing of this one. I dare to suggest that it is our task to facilitate the present Church's passing in order to assist in the birthing of the new. Paradoxically, hospice workers are also the midwives of new life.

The prophetic vocation is to help the community to accept a loss they cannot admit and to embrace a hope they cannot dare to believe. Prophets do this by attending to the present groans of the people and positing an alternative future vision. This, I believe, is the essence of being a spiritual leader in the Church during the time of transition."

(Fr. Bryan Massingale, Archdiocese of Milwaukee)

a new pentecost! a new church!

There is so much in this passage that is Marist and in accord with the vision of the early Marists on building a new Church. Do we believe a new Church is coming? Not only is it coming; it has to come! One with a Marial face? Pope John Paul II spoke clearly on this issue when he reminded the Curia that the Church was Marial before it was Petrine.

Certainly we have to wonder what happened to Mary in the post-Vatican II church. It was not because of the loss of sound writing in Mariology, an enriched area with papal documents such as *Marialis Cultus* and *Redemptoris Mater* and the balanced writing of a host of scholars, but it has not been getting through to the people in the pews, let alone some religious who carry her name. I am not referring to Marian devotions, which are perhaps the main area of visible crisis. Paul VI wisely stated that we are to be



completely free in the area of devotion to Mary.

Only when we face the truth contained in the above statement can we accept the truth that God is doing something new in history, either with us, without us, or against us, can we become part of the solution — or remain part of the problem. Rahner was quite right in his statement that the Christian of the future will either be a mystic... or will cease to be. The other dimension is the risk to be a prophet, or better to accept prophetic mysticism, the call to live prophetically.

let go! let live!

When Pope Benedict recently spoke to the gathered group of new Cardinals he reminded them that their position was one of service and not of power. This is

an important reminder that a Marial Church wears the face of the three 'Nos!' — no to power, no to prestige, and no to position. The humble role of service, the face of the Mary of the Visitation, fits well into such a call. Back in 1970 a German theologian named Josef Ratzinger spoke the following words:

"Today the Church has become for many the main obstacle to faith; in it can be seen only the struggle for human power, the poor theatre of those who, by their observations, want to absolutise official Christianity and paralyse the true spirit of Christianity. We may well ask if the situation is any different today from then?"

Any mother faces the challenge of letting go of her children. Mary had this experience in her life. In Luke's gospel, Simeon speaks of a sword of sorrow piercing Mary's heart. Luke does not place her at the foot of the Cross but quickly brings her into Pentecost. It is John's gospel alone that places Mary at the Cross with the Beloved Disciple. The sword of sorrow in Luke contains a different focus. It is the pain of separation for the mission of her Son and the consequent rejection that he suffers in it.

john paul's challenge

A number of years ago, Pope John Paul II in speaking to the Marist major superiors put to them the challenge of building a Marial church. Br. Emili has picked up this challenge and has placed it within his letter to the International Marist Youth Meeting to take place in Madrid this year. To go with Mary in haste to a new land must also include a new way of being church, 'together, with enthusiasm, hand in hand with Mary.' The hope in the letter is the concrete task of going towards a Marial Church, discovering its Marial face and making it obvious through their lives. Bro Emili says:

"There are many young people who perceive the Church as authoritarian, clerical, masculine, negative and remote. John Paul II invited us as Marists some years ago to work towards building a 'Marial' Church, or it may be, a Church which reflected Mary's face and attitudes, and therefore manifested itself in a communion which is fraternal, participative and close to us. It seems to me a beautiful thing to offer ourselves to this challenge: to work together to offer our world and our Church the attractive face of Mary, woman and mother; it would be a great contribution, with a great prophetic dimension." ■

Kieran Fenn is a Marist Brother involved in adult education and lay formation. He lives in Lower Hutt.

Still

We scry the lazy, undisturbed air.
What's an ear
but a clot of flesh?

We want to understand the silence here,
to sense what it contains,
learn the science of its shape.

Something claims it can be understood;
some underlying instinct
already has insight
into the quiet's holding something,
a presence not an absence.

We stand under the skylight's lens,
under the moon's searchlight.
We are this spirit's understudies,
rolling, if only for a moment,
in the snowballing peace.

It was there, too,
when we stood under the stars,
and listened in those thin slices of time
when waves pause before falling –

silence pulsing through the surf.
It is sturdy,
undermining what the curve presents,
gifting us our present understanding.

But we remain, as it were,
sightless –
unable to describe this still.

Hayden Williams

the politics of good health

With a \$14 billion annual price tag, health is sure to be a strongly contested election issue come November. Peter Glensor has worked at the grassroots in community health and has also had extensive governance experience at District Health Board level. Michael Fitzsimons catches up with him for a progress report on how our health system is faring.

It is so common to hear of the shortcomings of New Zealand's health system that it comes as something of a surprise to hear Peter Glensor, long-time health worker and administrator, deliver a different verdict.

"New Zealand has a good place internationally in terms of health outcomes. We have some of the best maternity figures in the world in terms of child and maternal mortality and a very good maternity system. We have good stats in terms of death rates and life expectancy — we are right up there in the wealthy world."

A paper Peter delivered at the Australian Health Summit earlier this year expands on the positive message. According to a 2009 survey, 89.7 percent of New Zealanders report themselves to be in good health, a rate that tops international rankings. We have achieved immunisation rates of 88 percent for children. Our emergency department processing times have steadily improved, with 87 percent of patients being seen within six hours — a rise of seven percent between September 2009 and March 2010.

New Zealand's rate of daily smoking of 18 percent in 2007 is the fourth lowest in the OECD, and we have close to the highest rate of decline between 1995 and 2007.

"This exciting data [on smoking]," says Peter, "is the fruit of years of intersectoral work, and a classic example of good public health

"...economic growth should not be viewed as the sole measure of a country's success ... the fair distribution of health, well-being and environmental and social sustainability are equally important goals."

– New Zealand Medical Association, 2011

work — where price increases, legislative changes, personal health interventions and social marketing campaigns work together to achieve a real health gain."

On the health workforce front, the levels of job satisfaction among New Zealand physicians rate very highly, a fact at odds with the perception of dissatisfaction among our health specialists. A 2009 Commonwealth Fund survey of primary care physician work satisfaction has New Zealand right at the top, alongside Norway. Interestingly, our wealthy neighbour Australia comes 10th of the 11 countries surveyed.

So all in all there is a lot to take satisfaction in "but these are all matters that can be easily undone," warns Peter.

"They can be easily undone by

losing our sought-after health professionals to other countries, by failing to compete with overseas remuneration rates, by the continually rising costs of new technology and expensive pharmaceuticals that are coming onto the market all the time. A lot of us are worried about the current threat to Pharmac, a world-renowned drug-purchasing agency which has held our drug costs much more effectively than other countries. If Pharmac's future comes under threat by some kind of free-trade negotiations, that would be a very serious issue for us as a country."

Another area of concern is the "serious inequalities within our population which can't be neglected. If they are, they will come back to bite us. In times of economic pressure, the inequalities are likely to get worse.

Says Peter: "The rich-poor divide and the racial divide are reflected in all sorts of health conditions, not just the obvious ones. Ethnicity is a compounding factor so that even when you correct for socio-economic status, being Maori, for example, means you are more likely to suffer poorer outcomes. Rich or middle class Maori are worse off than rich or middle class Pakeha."

New Zealand's health inequalities are also on the mind of the traditionally conservative New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA). In a strong statement issued in March, the NZMA calls on the Government

to “urgently address the inequities in health status experienced by Maori, Pacific Island peoples, refugees, migrants and other vulnerable groups.” It says a whole-of-government approach is required. In particular policies addressing education, employment, poverty, housing, taxation and social security should be assessed for their health impact.

The NZMA goes on to say “that economic growth should not be viewed as the sole measure of a country’s success and that the fair distribution of health, well-being and environmental and social sustainability are equally important goals.”

With a background in community health, Peter Glensor is well aware of the health disparities facing people on low incomes. He was a Methodist minister for 20 years before working as a community worker in a poor community in the Hutt Valley.

“As a community worker, health was a presenting issue from day one. In 1991, having tried other ways first, we began a general practice called the Hutt Union and Community Health Service. In time I became its manager and it quickly expanded – community-owned with salaried staff serving a very high-needs community. In the 90s a group of union health services around New Zealand, plus Maori and community health groups, came together to form a national network of community-owned primary health services in the face of a very hostile Government.”

The network was called Health Care Aotearoa and in 1997 Peter became its fulltime coordinator.

“We became very involved in health policy development. Bill English, the Minister of Health of the day, took a shine to us, giving us some money to expand our model of primary health care around different places.”

Elements of the Health Care Aotearoa model — for example, capitation funding, a focus on multi-disciplinary teams and greater community engagement — were picked up



Peter Glensor

in the Labour Government’s primary health strategy and the new Primary Health Organisation structure. Peter was appointed to the board for the transitional Hutt Valley District Health Board (DHB) and has been on the Hutt DHB since then. These days he is also an appointed member of the Capital and Coast DHB and represents Lower Hutt on the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Peter’s appointment to several DHBs reflects the current Government’s move to achieve greater regional collaboration between DHBs. A restructuring of DHBs to achieve this is likely in the future.

From his governance vantage point, he sees a constant tension between ensuring that our hospital services are as efficient and productive as possible while ensuring there is adequate funding to support the

community and public health sectors.

“The political spotlight is on hospitals and surgery waiting lists, but the reality is that the health gains, as opposed to correcting things that are wrong, happen out in the community, in the public and primary health fields.”

A focus on the whole community needs to be at the heart of our health planning, says Peter, and that’s always a challenge.

“Are we able to look at the good of the whole nation? That means addressing health disparities because having an underclass which is sicker and dies earlier has all sorts of negative impacts on the whole nation. We must ensure that the health programmes we have in place are accessible and appropriate for everyone.” ■

we are all disciples

Father Michael Hill interviewed Bishop Charles Drennan, the new co-adjutor bishop of Palmerston North, after his ordination in the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

In my childhood the visit of a Bishop to the parish was accompanied by a rush of rubric. The style of exercising the office of Bishop has changed. You have seen many examples of Bishops at work during your years in Rome. What's the core?

Each generation contributes insight into the understanding of any office and a part of that will include what we might call in the church purification or getting back to the basics. High pomp always runs the risk of turning liturgy into pantomime; giving expression to a particular aesthetic which has become disconnected from Jesus of Nazareth. The fact that Bishops are remembered by what they wore is itself a cause for concern! Bishops aren't liturgical ornaments.

The essence of the role of the Bishop is serving the unity we find in Jesus Christ. This means building up the communion of all the individuals and families and institutions of the diocese in union with the universal Church in order to spread

the Gospel. The Church is not a club. We are disciples. I sometimes wonder if the internal tension which can mark the Church would lessen if we stopped applying political terms to ourselves — like liberal and conservative — and instead focused on the meaning of discipleship. In this way we keep our hearts and minds on Jesus while experiencing the comprehensiveness — the all-embracing nature — of our faith.

On a practical level what does that fostering of unity mean?

The Greek word *episcopos* means overseer. A bishop has to stand tall and stand back. This has nothing to do with pedestals. It has much to do with appraising strengths and weaknesses. In NZ perhaps because of the 'do it yourself' aspect to our culture I think there is a risk that Bishops end up doing too much just as Parish Priests can too. Bishops need to think, pray, observe, reflect, propose, tilt, encourage and sometimes correct or insist. That requires a profound sense of the

big picture which for the Church is nothing less than universal. We can't be all things to all people. Delegation is imperative. That's why the Church, contrary to many people's perception, is highly decentralized. Canon Law requires very few decisions to be flicked upstairs. Creativity needs to be applied to being who we are not grappling to be something else.

The term pontifex — bridge-builder — also indicates the 'how' of fostering unity. It's a great image but one which can easily morph into a piecemeal 'Mr fix-it' model; again a kiwi tendency. The strong pragmatist streak in our culture certainly produces results, but does it engender ideals? Christians know that we can transcend our natural limitations and let ourselves be drawn into another plane; the realm of ideals and grace and insight. What our society urgently needs is voices of wisdom, voices of grounded hope, voices prepared to discern and name the causes of wounds or dysfunctions in society rather than remain satisfied with rearranging the symptoms. In this way we find cohesion both as individuals and as a society. The solutions of political correctness have in the main been a sham. Of course it is not just Bishops who should try to echo the call of wisdom. We need to speak out in unison with school principals and teachers, with health care professionals, with parents, and with like-minded citizens in order that the truths about being human are respected by society and can flourish in our homes and communities.

God's providence shapes us in different ways. Looking back on your life, do you



see the trace of God's hand preparing you for your new mission?

That's a tough question; I wouldn't want to presume anything! I didn't grow up in a period of 'social catholicism' and the pre- and post-Vatican II comparisons I find a bit tedious. My lifespan has been one in which the Christian voice in NZ society has grown steadily weaker though that is now changing mainly due to our recent migrant communities and the growing importance of inter-religious dialogue on the international stage.

So, my generation is concerned about identity – Maori renaissance would be another example. We don't see being specific about Christianity and Catholicism as being predatory. We are passionate about contributing to our society by offering our faith to it. And we are convinced that, as disciples of Christ who is the way the truth and the life, this contribution will be of benefit to all people, will serve the common good.

How does that answer your question? We are products of our time which is always sacred as God's method of revelation occurs in time. But the task of reading the signs of the times is not easy. On a popular cultural level generational change occurs about every ten years. That's a major test for evangelization. I believe that having a wide cross-section of friends, having pursued various branches of study, having taught and travelled, coming from a family with a strong sense of service and little interest in materialism, have all been a great preparation and support for priesthood and now the episcopacy. Perhaps I should share with you what a Cluny Sister who was my standard one teacher wrote in a card for my episcopal ordination: "the flowering we all rejoice in now, I saw as a seed in you as a young boy — and so the man".

Leadership is complex in any organization today. In the Church perhaps particularly



Bishop Peter Cullinane entrusts the Book of the Gospels to the newly ordained Bishop Drennan.

so. Where are the challenges and the signs of hope?

Every leader grapples with difficulties, real or perceived. That's normal. In 384 St Augustine shifted from Rome to Milan because he found the Roman youth too yobbish to teach! Undoubtedly the secular nature of contemporary NZ society disturbs believers of any faith and, we claim, is deflating the soul of all New Zealanders. That's a pervasive challenge for every parent, teacher, and believer. An insidious and widespread example of secular thinking is pitting truth as the enemy of tolerance. It's a natural consequence of placing God out of sight and out of mind. To be asked to tolerate something that is false or inappropriate or offensive is nonsensical intolerance, as Blessed Antonio Rosmini pointed out. Yet NZ is fast becoming a society where everything has to be tolerated except smoking and Chinese multinationals.

Having said that, there is much which is very good about our culture. Our young people are so often filled with generosity and inquisitiveness. And many of our Catholic schools are becoming increasingly proactive in forming them with Christian

hearts and minds, countering the garbage formation with which much popular TV invades our homes. Recently I have been with St Peter's college students in Palmerton North, Hato Paora boys in Fielding, and girls from Sacred Heart in New Plymouth. It's been a wonderful encounter of engaging, friendly and considerate young people. On my last working day in the Christchurch Diocese I led a voluntary benediction with over 100 boys and staff at St Bede's College, and then heard confessions at the request of the boys themselves. Later the same day I wrote a letter of recommendation for a beautiful young woman from the Cathedral parish about to enter formation with the Nazareth Sisters. These are examples of happenings which many have thought were extinct. Such occasions and such young people don't just give us hope for the future; they remind us who we all are today.

Therein lies the great challenge which is at the same time our source of joy: for each of us to live the vocation that comes from baptism. ■

Father Michael Hill is founding editor of Tui Motu.

SHOULD I SPE

Mary of Magda

The writer, after seeing a Wellington art exhibition that explores falling in and out of love, reflects on the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalen, a relationship which she sees as deep, loving and life-giving.

On July 22 each year Mass is celebrated, worldwide, in memory of St. Mary of Magdala. On that day I honour my patron saint. It's a solemnity to me. However, it is a less auspicious day, a memoria, on the official church calendar. Magdalen has always provided me with generous subject matter on which to meditate. I can lose myself in her vision as my own insights become entwined with hers. Yet, historically it seems, for many clergy she is an awkward, uncomfortable and quietly burdensome type.

Mary of Magdala was 'in love'.

In the east wing of the Wellington City Art Gallery, currently, visitors are invited to contemplate "...a desiring but interrogative gaze..." in the collaborative exhibition *Tender is the Night*. Here, art explores the 'ins' and 'outs' of falling in love. While the east might raise the bar of discomfort in its viewers, the west wing tries to show that courtships and pairings can survive. In-loveness, I sense, is like a kinetic, layered and texturized sphere orbiting a luminous hope of 'physical encounter'.

The only thing which feeds and sustains in-loveness is reciprocity. God understands the physical nature of love so much that God becomes physical for us. God comes to touch us and to be touched. God rejects remoteness from experience close up, and from love which God not only created but is. In the infinite possibilities of God's unlimited will it is wholly possible for God to pre-determine (through God's son) an encounter of in-loveness while in the world.

No this is not another 'Jesus and Magdalen' fictionalized account of a love-affair. It is, however, about desire. Essentially in-loveness and desire are the same thing. What they are not are monikers for lust. Dignity is absent from lust so God, as supreme



Dignity, cannot be in lust. Desire, yes; desiderare — to long for, to desire, to consider. So desiring is like "...an interrogative gaze", contemplative and reasoned.

Mary of Magdala was in love with the son of God.

Jesus did not have to read her heart because her love could be interpreted directly in the openness of her actions and her unabashed abandonment of self. There was no shame in her longing to be always near him; to need to encounter him physically, publicly — wherever. She had, after all, fulfilled God's first commandment to love God — utterly.

Jesus loved all, of course, yet we know some were favoured. In John's gospel account, at one point, three disciples were present at the tomb. Two would depart: John (clearly favoured) and Peter who would be called to lead the new church. One remains: a woman. Logic suggests she was also favoured, even

AK OF LOVE?

Magdala: a Panorama

Clarice Stewart



pre-ordained (as were the companions who deserted her) for something truly great. We know Jesus had dispossessed Magdalen of some, seemingly, psychological malaise. At the apex of her healing we can see how her gaze (now unencumbered) might peer into the soul of her healer and how her nascent desire to follow him could have been a divine call to a unique in-loveness.

In Jesus' mercy her gratitude was ignited. His physical encounter with Magdalen invites a future of touch between them. In his generosity he responds to her need for him in the most tangible way her tender soul can comprehend: touch. And being in love is all about gratitude. Every gesture, regardless of how insignificant it might appear to an outsider, is amplified by the need to express thanks and by an ever-present urge to communicate — even one's breath to the beloved. As the psalmist cries out, My body pines for you.

Every word the beloved utters is credible to the one caught up in in-loveness, no matter how incredible it might sound. Love and Truth are inextricably woven. Magdalen was heroic in her love for she showed no fear. Her love was outstanding in her resolute determination to follow her beloved wherever it might lead her. Without doubt, she believed he was the son of God yet in her tenderness she was in love with a man called Jesus. By loving the man, it followed naturally, she was in love with his divinity.

Magdalen, truly tender, feels deeply the touch of Jesus. She searches for more. She stays close, as close as she can get to experience the brush of his fingers, his personal love just for her. Jesus is, of course, a personal God and Magdalen is, personally, in love with him.

Tender was the night, the night of Mary of Magdala's lonely Sabbath. Here, poignantly, surface the "...emotional and psychological underpinnings of...physical encounters." As in art we have to imagine what it was really like for her, Magdalen, whose scant tale has made bones for many an artist to flesh out.

And so having watched her beloved die, slowly, gruesomely, watched the hands that touched her torn apart, now she is physically incarcerated by the confines of Mosaic law. Wracked by grief, robbed of sleep and raw with tears, she is drifting now in a chasm of separation. All she has to cling to is the luminous hope of a parting caress by anointing the body of her beloved.

The fact that Mary of Magdala never comes to encounter that final caress is due ultimately and exquisitely to her beloved's altered physical body. The star she faithfully orbited had now moved into a brand new dimension. She reached out, as she had always done in their history of touch, but touch is reserved now for doubters. His radiant touch expressly for her, his fresh caress, has been transformed into the most sublime message ever trusted to a human being in the spectrum of time.

Should I speak of Love? Yes, Mary of Magdala, always speak of love. ■

Clarice Stewart is a writer presently living in Wellington, having been displaced from Christchurch by earthquakes.

two pauls, a cobbler and a prayer

Glynn Cardy

The writer reflects on St Paul's statements on prayer in the Letter to the Romans. He looks at the dynamic nature of the Trinity which intertwines us ever more closely to God.

Paul Tillich, the great German-American theologian of the 20th century, once reflected on a passage by his namesake, Paul of Tarsus. Romans 8:26 reads, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words." It expresses, as Tillich says, the experience of a man who knew how to pray and who, because he knew how to pray, said that he did not know how to pray.

Most Christians are familiar with two types of spoken prayer: the liturgical kind and the spontaneous kind. The former runs the risk of being reduced to formulaic incantations containing words that either only theologians can explain or when they do have little resonance with our lives. The latter runs the risk of turning prayer into an ordinary conversation with somebody who is called "God," but who is actually another human being to whom we tell things, often at great length, to whom we give thanks and of whom we ask favours.

How then can we pray? According to the Pauls it is humanly impossible. We speak to 'somebody' who is neither some body nor somebody else yet is nearer to us than we ourselves are. We address 'somebody' who can never become an object of our address because that some/it/she/he is always subject, always creating, and always dynamic. We tell things to that some-without-a-body who knows, as the Pauls say, not only what we utter and are going to utter but also all the unconscious tendencies out of which

our conscious utterances grow.

This way of speaking about God is difficult if one understands God's 'body' or 'person/s' literally rather than metaphorically. God is not an object which we can observe from afar. Rather we are immersed in God. We participate in God. In God subject and object are not split and neither are we. The descriptors of God as 'Father', 'Son', or 'Spirit' are helpful when they point to divinity-moving-in-relatedness and unhelpful when they become static independent objects of devotion.

There is something about prayer that makes words redundant. Words, created by and used in our conscious life, are not the essence of prayer. Rather prayer's essence is a leaning, a longing, expressed at a deep level. Joy Cowley calls prayer 'a leaning of the heart'. Such spirited prayer is part of us, yet more than us, part of God, yet part of us. God is known in and yet beyond words and beings.

St Paul says, "The Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words." Paul uses the title 'the Spirit' - a fluid, active, and elusive descriptor - rather than the word God. It seems his use of language is a way of saying that God within [the Spirit] is praying to God beyond [the Father?], without saying there is division in God. God within is an intertwining of the conscious and subconscious expressed in our vulnerability and receptivity.

The following is an old Hassidic tale of the prayer of the sigh:

A cobbler came to Rabbi Isaac and said, "Tell me what to do about my morning prayer. My customers are

poor folk who have only one pair of shoes. I pick up their shoes late in the evening and work on them most of the night; at dawn there is still work to be done if they are to have their shoes before they go to work. Now the question is: What should I do about my morning prayer?"

"What have you been doing till now?" the Rabbi asked.

"Sometimes I rush through the prayer quickly and get back to my work — but then I feel bad about it. At other times I let the hour of prayer go by. Then too I feel a sense of loss and every now and then, as I raise my hammer from the shoes, I can almost hear my heart sigh, "What an unlucky man am I, that I am not able to make my morning prayer.""

Said the Rabbi, "If I were God I would value that sigh more than the prayer."

The essence of prayer is the act of godness of which and in which we are intertwined. Godness is an act of love towards all, including ourselves. This is the deeper truth of the Trinity: it is not the connectivity, movement, and love between the three but the connectivity, movement, and love between the many, including you and me. It is a dynamic model of God.

And prayer is recognizing that we are inside not outside of that dynamic. For such prayer we can try to use words but it is essentially beyond words. It is better to use silence or let out a sigh. ■

Archdeacon Glynn Cardy is the pastor of St Matthew-in-the-City, Auckland, and a much published spiritual writer

This is a eulogy given at a recent funeral. It speaks of the relationship between two people of differing age and the grace that flowed from their honesty and their ability to relate in trust and to speak freely of God.

I knew Jack for 13 years only. I met him on my first day at Alcoholics Anonymous. We were at a Southern Area Assembly at Hanmer Springs on 31 October 1997. I was only one day sober, so I don't remember much. But this elderly gentleman in a blazer with a walking stick came up to me and said, "Good to see you again, Paul. Keep coming back." I thought, well, I have never met this old guy before. I must have been here too long, as I thought Queen Mary Hospital was full of fruitcakes and delusional people.

I said to Mike who was walking beside me, "How did he know my name?" Mike informed me that it was on my name tag and that I was the fruitcake. He then told me that Jack had been sober for 39 years. I laughed and thought, yep, delusional, how could anyone be 39 years sober? I was only 31 years old.

Not long after that Jack became my sponsor. He became my inspiration, the genuine humble and serene person I wanted to be. Jack taught me how to pray, how to forgive, how to serve others and most of all how to love. I never knew what love was then, but today I do. I had told so many I loved them in a blithering state in the early hours after some big night out. But sober, I only ever said it to one man. That was Jack. I really did love him, and he allowed me to tell him.

Jack was the only person that I could be myself with. I didn't need

a mask. I didn't need to impress him or lie to him.

I spoke at my mother's funeral in Cromwell back in 1999. As I was speaking I looked up through the crowd and saw Jack looking back at me. I knew then that everything was going to be OK. I didn't even know that Jack was going to be there. But he had driven his little Lada all the way to Cromwell from Dunedin stopping only twice for cat-naps along the way.

Jack always put others before himself. He had shown me the meaning of unconditional love. My memories include his gentle but deep spiritual faith — that nothing happens by mistake; that with God all things are possible; that we need to thank God that people and all things are exactly the way God means them to be; to pray for others and to see the good in them. Jack often told me he thought God was an alcoholic because God did not like being told what to do.

Then I did not know about serenity and humility but now I think of Jack and I understand. We spent many hours together at meetings, in the car, at assemblies and at his home. And when I left Dunedin four years ago for Hokitika I missed the regular contact with Jack. But our relationship didn't end, it changed. We spoke every Wednesday night, sometimes about a problem, sometimes about the cricket but always about God. Jack had given me the most incredible gift — he introduced me to God

and made sure I kept in regular contact with God.

Jack often said in relation to Heaven that if it is so good up there, why do we have to hang around here for so long? We laughed and agreed that there is more forgiveness needed in this world and more alcoholics suffering who may need our help.

I am sure that as Jack approaches his creator at the pearly gates there won't be a judgment interview, there will be a red carpet as he arrives home.

Jack, I love you. I miss you. I am sad but so, so blessed to have had you in my life.

*God grant me the serenity
To accept the things
I cannot change
The courage to change
the things I can
And the wisdom
to know the difference. ■*

*The anonymity of the eulogist is
preserved in line with the traditions of
Alcoholics Anonymous and at the request
of Jack's family*

a war of words

Robert Mickens

This article details the tortuous process by which Rome has moved with measured determination to take over control of the translation of the new English Missal from the 11 English-speaking bishops' conferences. This is the story of the politics behind the translation. The writer tells of an astonishing final twist in the tale: many more changes were made to texts, after final approval had been already given to them.

Late in April 2010, one sunny afternoon, Pope Benedict XVI was presented with a handsomely bound volume of the new English translation of the Roman Missal. The ceremony took place during a luncheon in his honour at a Renaissance villa in the Vatican Gardens. It was hosted by members of *Vox Clara* ("clear voice"), a commission of a dozen senior English-speaking bishops that the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (CDW) had handpicked back in 2001 to help it gain greater control over the translation process.

"This has been a truly collegial enterprise," Pope Benedict said of the nine-year effort to translate the *Missale Romanum* from Latin into English. "I want you to know how much I appreciate the great collaborative endeavour to which you have contributed," he told the *Vox Clara* bishops, their priest-collaborators and top officials from the CDW.

omission of mention of icel

Astonishingly, the Pope never mentioned the group that actually did the translations, Icel (the International Commission on English in the Liturgy). Many saw this as a deliberate slight by those who had drafted the Pope's speech, members of *Vox Clara* or the CDW. Even by the most benign interpretation, it was an oversight. And one that was shamefully magnified by the fact that Icel's chairman, Bishop Arthur Roche of Leeds, was in Rome that day, but had not been

invited to the luncheon.

It would be extraordinary if these were signs of disfavour, because Icel had already been re-shaped so that it answered directly to Rome and translated the Missal according to principles it laid down. Icel is a mixed commission, established in 1963 by the major English-speaking episcopal conferences to produce the official translations of the Church's prayer ever since the liturgy was put into the vernacular following the Second Vatican Council. It has been the body through which the bishops have sought to fulfil their rightful authority — explicitly recognised by the Council — over liturgical translations. But the Missal translation saga shows how the CDW succeeded in taking away the bishops' conferences' power. And, ironically, they did so with the help of English-speaking bishops who were appointed to *Vox Clara*.

icel revamped

Cardinal Jorge Medina Estévez, the Chilean who headed the CDW from 1996 to 2002, led the way in reshaping Icel. Long dissatisfied with its work, in 1999 he formally ordered its episcopal board to re-draft the commission statutes. As the bishops dragged their feet to comply, the cardinal worked to reverse the Vatican's old guidelines and principles for translations by publishing the 2001 instruction, *Liturgiam Authenticam* (LA). He also set up *Vox Clara*, which would hold its first meeting in the spring of 2002. The future Cardinal George Pell of Australia,

a man fiercely opposed to inclusive language, was appointed *Vox Clara*'s chairman. English Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor became secretary, while US Cardinal Justin Rigali was named as treasurer. He fulfilled everyone's expectations by ensuring *Vox Clara*'s funding through the generosity of the Knights of Columbus.

pressure applied

Just before retiring in October 2002, Cardinal Medina pressurised the Icel bishops into drastically overhauling the commission's Washington-based operations. Key personnel changes were made at a meeting in late July of that year in Ottawa, including the forced retirement of Dr John Page. The American, a church historian and scholar of John Henry Newman, had been the commission's executive secretary since 1980 and a senior staff member for many years prior to that.

new secretary

The Icel bishops replaced him with Fr Bruce Harbert, a former Anglican and a Birmingham priest who had studied classics at Oxford and patristics in Rome. Though he had been an Icel collaborator, he was a vocal critic of the commission and a proponent of more literal translations. Upon his appointment he was given the new title of executive director. Bishop Maurice Taylor of Aberdeen, ill with cancer, stepped down as chairman of the episcopal board and Bishop Roche of Leeds was elected to replace him.

defence of old icel

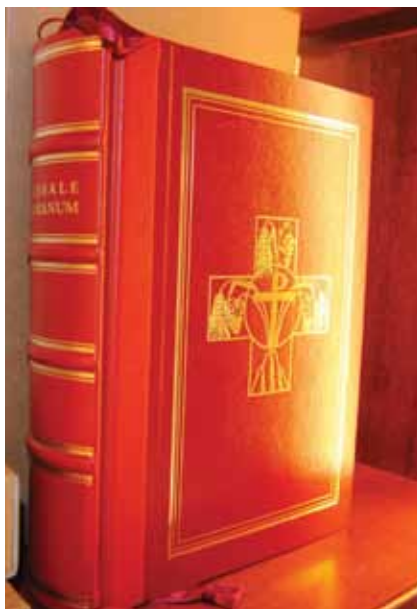
A week after resigning Bishop Taylor issued a letter defending the old Icel against “attacks” that had been levelled at it by, among others, Cardinal Medina’s congregation. “The impression is given, and indeed is seemingly fostered by some, that Icel is a recalcitrant group of people, uncooperative, even disobedient,” the bishop wrote. “This is mistaken and untrue.” He also denounced the CDW’s treatment of Dr Page, saying he had been “pilloried, sometimes by name, often by title, occasionally by inference”. It was a final defence of the work Icel had tried to achieve. But it was too late.

approval of new icel statutes

The Nigerian Cardinal Francis Arinze took over from Medina as CDW prefect in autumn 2002 and would preside over the final approval of Icel’s revised statutes. The presidents of the 11 episcopal conferences of Icel and representatives of the 15 associate conferences met Cardinal Arinze in the Vatican Synod Hall. Astonishingly, they acquiesced to the CDW’s claim that the Holy See alone had the right to create mixed commissions. This was spelled out in *Liturgiam Authenticam* but it was also a direct contradiction of the Vatican II constitution on the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Not a single bishop raised his voice in protest. “At least they could have had the decency to change its name,” said Mgr Fred McManus, one of Icel’s pioneers, before dying in 2005.

answer direct to rome now

The 2003 statutes meant that, for all practical purposes, Icel would now answer directly to Rome and *Vox Clara*, not to the bishops’ conferences. The restructured body began its appointed task of producing a brand new translation of the Roman Missal in great secrecy under the strict control of *Vox Clara*. Whereas the former commission prided itself on being transparent the Vatican obliged the



new Icel to impose oaths of loyalty, confidentiality and anonymity.

new translations

Between 2003 and 2008 it guardedly began translating the order of Mass and the rest of the prayers and blessings in the Missal. As each successive draft went before the various English-speaking conferences, heated discussions emerged. Nowhere were these more intense than in the US, the largest of the Icel member-conferences. But Chicago’s Cardinal George, a *Vox Clara* member and the conference president, made sure Icel’s literalist translations garnered enough votes for approval. At one point in the long process, he and some other conservative members of the conference warned the US bishops to approve the translations or Rome would impose its own. Apparently, there was similar friction in other conferences.

approval of order of mass

The first item to be approved was the order of the Mass. The CDW gave it its recognitio in June 2008. By early 2010 it appears that all of the 11 Icel member-conferences had given final approval to the entire English Missal, although the process has been so lacking in transparency that the exact timeline is not completely clear.

One thing is for sure, the Americans approved the Missal texts in November 2009 and that seems to have been the clincher for *Vox Clara* and the CDW. The Holy See granted the recognitio on 25 March 2010.

But the story does not end there. The translators and officials of the revamped Icel, mostly under the direction of Mgr Harbert (replaced by Mgr Andrew Wadsworth of Westminster in 2009), were pleased with their efforts. Some of them indiscreetly boasted that their texts were superior to those of the old Icel. However, they, too, would soon feel the same bitter sting of rejection. In January 2010, *Vox Clara* announced that it had made undisclosed changes to the Icel text, even though the conferences had already canonically approved it.

real shock

But the real shock came in November 2010 when a scathing report, written anonymously, produced extensive evidence that last-minute changes had been made to the English Missal without the knowledge or approval of the competent conferences and in violation of the Vatican’s own translation rules. This was six months after Pope Benedict XVI had received the CDW-approved final version of the Missal.

bitter irony

So it was a bitter irony that the officials of the revamped Icel should also be fed a poison similar to the one they had dished out to their predecessors. They believed their Missal, which had been given the Vatican’s recognitio, was a done deal, only to discover that *Vox Clara* and/or the CDW had revised it. Some estimate that 10,000 changes were made. ■

Robert Mickens, an American layman, is the Rome correspondent of the London Tablet

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your money or your life?

Neil Vaney

The author reflects on questions of health care related to euthanasia, looks to the experience of other countries, and asks pertinent questions about the values and politics linked with the forthcoming general election

In 1883 Bishop Moran asked Dunedin Catholics to vote for him in parliamentary elections. He lost — clearly many Catholics did not vote for him. Clerics who tell Catholics just whom they should vote for step out of their competency.

However, some people may now be tempted to vote on a single issue such as abortion or civil marriages since these seem to be clear-cut issues. This may overlook the way in which many moral questions are interconnected; they are like Pacific atolls which are simply the visible part of the same volcanic ridge. We are reminded of the late Cardinal Bernardin's vision of a seamless garment of life; to protect a value coherently required a vision of seeing how many issues such as abortion, arms control, a living wage, are intertwined and interdependent.

Nevertheless I would like to put before you one area in which the Church may have some wisdom to share about giving one's vote. It rests on the insight that legislation opening the gate to euthanasia often flows out of a profoundly anti-Christian judgment: that the value of people is equated with their capacity to be part of the process of producing and consuming goods.

why spend money on the elderly?

Advocates of euthanasia tend to rely heavily on two arguments. The first is that the elderly are a burden to the

economy, they do not contribute. In the last six months of their lives they will run up medical costs the equal of the rest of their lives. Secondly, many elderly are sick and depressed; they endure chronic pain and would gladly pass away if the law allowed them a quick and painless death, one with dignity.

These ideas sound plausible, even compassionate. It does not take much thought to see the fallacies behind them, however. First, what is elderly today? Many outstanding citizens well into their 70s and 80s still live vigorous, happy and productive lives. Many of them in the informal economy do voluntary work, caring for grandchildren, educating immigrants and relations in ways that subsidize the formal economy in multimillion dollar

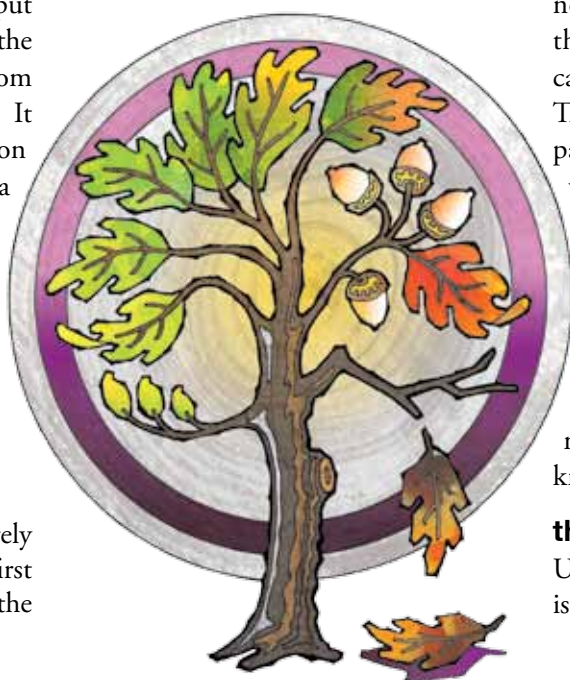
ways. They also carry the traditions, memories and values of the past, giving stability and security in society.

Though it is almost impossible to place monetary values on such roles, welfare agencies can and do put sums on the effects of lack of such structures, in alimony payments, youth crime, and lack of basic literacy and numeracy. These, too, run into the multimillions.

Detailed research by advocates for the elderly and disabled especially in Holland and Belgium where euthanasia is common, points to the greatest fear of the elderly: not death itself or even the pain of it but the thought of dying alone, or of imposing great trouble and expense on their families. Such fears, though not groundless, are not without solutions. Technically, the answers are simple. Palliative care is now an advanced science. There are few medical disorders the pain of which cannot be treated with a huge measure of success. Yet few doctors get trained in this art. In many residential homes 30%–70% of inmates show signs of depressions. Few are diagnosed; fewer are treated, though the medication and treatment regimes for this are well known and not difficult.

the heart of the problem

Underlying such pro-euthanasia views is a very narrow theory of economics,



that the economic health of a nation is most accurately measured by its capacity to produce and consume goods. An assumption common to such views is that economics is an exact predictive science akin to physics or chemistry. This is just not true.

Where national economic decisions are justified as value free, with no moral context, the price is always paid by those who are most at risk.

Economics has much more in common with sociology or political science. It cannot and does not allow for human greed and panic. That is why it has never been able fully to predict the swings of the stock market, to predict the massive collapse of the late 1920s nor to correct the profound suffering it brought about. Nor does it have any response to the massive gouging and grossly unethical investment policies of the huge corporate banks that helped bring about the collapses of 2008 and wiped out the savings of millions of hard-working people.

A classical defence of such practices is to say these are simply laws of the market that cannot be overridden without the destruction of the health of a nation. How hollow this is, stands revealed in times of war or national disaster. Such 'unthinkable' changes then become routine and are ushered in with phrases such as, for the sake of national security, or, in such times we all must make sacrifices.

Where national economic decisions are justified as value free, with no moral context, the price is always paid by those who are most at risk. The vision and value of human uniqueness has taken centuries of

enlightened law and moral precedents to build and sustain. Thirty years of permissive attitude and legal tolerance of euthanasia in Holland have brought a relatively swift change from a situation where 'mercy killing' was to be allowed simply for the elderly chronically pained and depressed to thousands of cases of children, defective, and non-consenting adults having their lives taken at the initiative of a relative or care-giver.

How ironic it is that numerous elderly Dutch people are migrating to Germany to avoid an unexpected and final visit from the doctor. Germany under the Nazi regime gave birth to a philosophy of death based on eugenics (which many Dutch resisted with great courage). Now it is the Dutch who are espousing a death-embracing culture driven by largely economic considerations.

ageing, death and elections

Think about raising these issues with candidates and parties:

- Could not government create new schemes or part subsidize current schemes to train willing elderly people for volunteer work, or allow tax breaks to

allow elderly to acquire new skills?

- Could not government give more public recognition and financial assistance to the superb role that hospices play in society?
- Could not government encourage more trainees in medical schools to learn the arts of palliative care and assistance for the elderly depressed?
- What guarantees can individual pro-euthanasia candidates give that any tolerance for individual 'mercy killings' does not lead to the sort of numerous non-consensual killings that have been documented in Holland?

I have no wish to emulate Bishop Moran in directing people how to vote (futile anyway!). But I do suggest that if candidates want to canonise economic processes as inviolable and sacrosanct, you might want to consider whether you would entrust your life or the life of your parents into their hands. ■

Neil Vaney is a Marist priest, who specializes in moral theology. He is the director of the Catholic Discipleship College, Auckland.

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a peep into the future

Pat Maloney

A priest of the Diocese of Dunedin looks at some facts surrounding the present state of the Catholic Church in New Zealand, and proposes a vision of hope.

It was time to respond to the congratulatory address for achieving 50 years of ordained priesthood, along with several other priests celebrating various ordination anniversaries. I addressed my words in a particular way to the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Charles Balvo, who graciously attended the function. I drew attention to the large number of grey heads among the many priests present at the function and asked His Excellency whether he realised that during his watch, he must be able to see that the Church in New Zealand, as we now know it, was dying. We are slowly but surely running out of priests. I further asked him whether or not he had advised the Holy Father of the situation. I sat down to a rather stunned silence. It was a little unfair, I suppose, in that His Excellency had no formal opportunity to reply. In fairness to him, in later correspondence he informed me that he did report back to Rome the situation of the New Zealand Church.

rome's viewpoint

One thing is clear to me, at least, that Rome does not feel inclined to take any steps which point to alleviating the growing crisis. Some years back when I was talking to Bishop Colin Campbell of Dunedin, he spoke of his first visit to Rome after being ordained bishop. When he told Pope John Paul II of the critical shortage of priests in his diocese, all the Pope could say was, "Pray for vocations." I'm sure Bishop Colin was much uplifted and encouraged by the advice. A lot of water has flowed down the Tiber since then, but the situation in Dunedin, as elsewhere in New Zealand, has only gotten worse.

pondering and reflecting

I recently attended an assembly of priests for the Archdiocese of Wellington, where for two days we pondered and reflected on the ever-deepening crisis. There was much talk about cooperation between pastoral areas, about lay pastoral workers and the importation of priests from overseas to

help solve the problem. Clearly all these measures and others have achieved much. Archbishop John Dew had earlier signaled that it was inevitable that there would have to be merging of schools and parishes. It was all brave, generous talk, but we also remembered figures that Archbishop John had quoted earlier. Computer projections indicated that ten years hence there would be only 16 active priests available for the whole Archdiocese.

the question how?

He put the question of how this would work out in ten years time when only one or two priests would be available for the South Island portion of the Archdiocese. This is territory stretching from Blenheim to Takaka and from Kaikoura to Westport, a huge area. I was brave or foolish enough to suggest that the challenge would be little different from that faced by early pioneer priests in the area who travelled vast distances between these various centres by horseback and any other means of transport available. Today or tomorrow, we would use light aircraft and other rapid means of transport to get around. Just as importantly we would use modern communication tools such as tele-conferencing. You could well imagine Mass being televised every Sunday to these scattered centres at which people could receive Holy Communion. It may not meet the full criteria for full sacramental participation at Mass, but I'm sure these would be deeply graced occasions.

More importantly, faith centres or Church centres would need to be formed all over the place which would be headed by some local lay person. Formation of such people would be a top priority for the Bishop. It's not hard to picture vibrant faith communities thriving under such challenging circumstances.

reality of mass attendance

Along with these dramatic figures, there is the reality that numbers of people attending Mass are also steadily decreasing. There seem to be exceptions in

places like Auckland city and other urban areas where Mass attendances are supported by large numbers of immigrants from Asia and Polynesia. I believe that is the case too in large urban parishes in Australia. Even so, it's hard to avoid the conclusion that if present trends continue and the Church fails to look at new models of ordained priesthood, the gradual decline of the Church as we now know it in New Zealand will continue. Lots of good things are happening and will continue to happen, but the long term result will be the same. We could well be reduced to the Church being little more than a lonely witness to the faith, rather much like the primitive Church of Jerusalem. But that is part of the Church's nature — being a sign, even though a not very large one.

a vision of the future

But is that the end? Of course not! The Lord's promise to be with her till the end of the world still holds good. I believe that what will happen will be the emergence of a Church purified and humbled. A grain of wheat has first to die before it bears fruit. It is only then that the Spirit of God will be free to operate properly. God always works best when we are weak, as St. Paul constantly reminds us. What emerges will be a Church less centralised in Rome, a Church less focused on power and more on service, a Church with real authority returned to diocesan bishops, a Church in which the baptismal gifts of all, laity and the ordained are recognised. We will see a Church humming with prayer and the active faith of innumerable small groups bringing their faith and their love into their communities. Thus renewed and purified, there will be an explosion of missionary zeal and a whole new hunger for contemplative prayer. It will all happen, but something has to die first.

good reason for hope

Now is a time for hope, a living strong hope. We carry on through difficult, challenging times, but there is good reason for hope. God is at God's best when the situation seems impossible. There have been plenty of times in the past when the Church has sunk to a very low ebb and been reinvigorated. God has a way at such times of raising up a Francis or a Dominic or a Bernard, charismatic people who single-handedly have turned history around. Personally, I'm praying for a Pope John XXIV and soon! ■

Pat Maloney is a diocesan priest living in active retirement in Motueka.

*"The Word of God is alive
and active" Heb 4:12*



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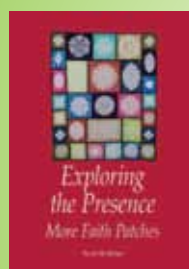
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“but she said...” a female genealogy

(Matthew 15:21-28)

Kathleen Rushton

“Each of us has a female family tree: we have a mother, a maternal grandmother and great-grandmothers, we have daughters ...” So wrote the Belgian born philosopher, Luce Irigaray, who continues: “Let us try to situate ourselves within that female genealogy so that we can win and hold on to our identity. Let us not forget, moreover, that we already have a history, that certain women, despite all the cultural obstacles, have made their mark upon history and all too often have been forgotten by us...”



A Female Genealogy

I recovered my female genealogy after reading an article by Aotearoa New Zealand Josephite theologian, Ann Gilroy. She was responding to a demeaning account she had heard given by a tour guide about St Radegund, the abbess of the former convent on which Jesus College Cambridge now stands. Some of the images of my female genealogy are on my shelves. I see myself as standing on their shoulders. They are with me constantly.

Among them are a genealogy of saints: Catherine of Siena, Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine McAuley; a genealogy of “unknown” women who have gone before me: my nana Katie Histen, Pat Matheson, Sr Mary Germaine Bade; and a genealogy of biblical women: the prophet Anna, the Woman of Samaria, and Justa...

Justa – Who is she?

An early tradition calls the first woman given voice in Matthew’s gospel Justa. She “cried out” (Mt 15: 22). The Greek verb used indicates “crying out in prayer” to gods/God. This is a very different sense from the common translation of “shouting out.” She prays from the psalms, “Have mercy on me, Lord.” She calls Jesus by the Jewish title, “Son of David.” These words would be surprising on the lips of one called “a Canaanite”, for this was the name for Israel’s ancient enemy. Therefore, it is probably an anachronism. Such a people did not exist in the time of Jesus.

In this gospel, Justa is a nameless woman, a mother alone with a sick daughter, an outsider from “that region” of the great Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. She is from “that region,” not the cities themselves. She is probably poor. In Matthew’s gospel narrative, there is tension between the centre, Jerusalem and the outer regions. There is also a tension over whether Jesus “...was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (15:24) or whether he is sent to all nations (Mt 28:19).

As a Gentile, Justa stands in the line of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba (named only as the wife of Uriah), the foreign foremothers in Jesus’ genealogy. She is one of the foreigners, such as the Magi and the Roman centurion, who recognise Jesus in significant ways. Indeed, Justa’s encounter with Jesus is often seen as widening his mission to include all.

Context

The best way to understand a gospel pericope, literally “a cutting,” as we have seen above, is to place it within the context of the wider gospel. Great light, too, is thrown on a particular story by placing it in its near context. Jesus’ words, “Woman, great is your faith!” contrast with his words to Peter, “You of little faith” (14:31), and again to the disciples, “You of little faith” (16:8). These same disciples ask Jesus to send this troublesome woman away, as they did with the crowd of five thousand “plus women and children.”

The words of Jesus about throwing the children’s food to the dogs, and the woman’s reply that “even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master’s table” (v.27), are placed between accounts of the feeding of the five thousand with loaves of bread (14:13-21) and the feeding of the four thousand (15:32-39). Jesus also warned against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees (16:6).

But She Said

Many find this story hard to cope with because it gives a picture of Jesus which is the opposite of what we imagine him to be. He does not answer the woman. He appears even rude and ignores her at first. Some find this persistent woman hard to cope with, too. The robustness of the conversation between her and Jesus is shown when the first Greek word of five consecutive verses is translated literally: “But he did not answer her a word.” (v. 23). “But he answered...” (v.24). “But she came ...” (v.25). “But he answered ...” (v.26). “But she said ...” (v.27). This mother persists in moving beyond accepted boundaries – all for the well-being of her daughter.

Justa’s story in Matthew 15:21-28 is heard on 20th Sunday of Ordinary Time (14 August) and on the Wednesday of 18th Week of Ordinary Time (3 August). Such a Wednesday, a number of years ago, was the first time I had attended Mass in our now shattered Christchurch Cathedral after several years’ absence studying Sacred Scripture. On that occasion and often since, this woman Justa who is part of my female genealogy both assures and questions me: Who is “my daughter?” For whom do I cry out in prayer to God advocating persistently in word and action? “But she came...” When does this need to be my stance? “But she said ...” When are these to be my words? Would Jesus’ words to me be “you of little faith” or “great is your faith”? ■

Kathleen Rushton RSM of Christchurch is currently at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium.

A Meditation

*The soft gong sounds.
Silence, stillness quietly hold
This moment only.
Wholly in the moment. Now.
Only being in the slow breath,
Surrounded and upheld in the living silence.
Present only in the moment,
Peace flowing through the stillness,
Gathered in the quietness,
Being in the breathing
Until the gong sounds.*

Pen Whitaker

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pilgrim pieces

Exploring the Presence: More Faith Patches

Trish McBride

Published by Patricia McBride,
Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand.
(mcbride@paradise.net.nz)

Reviewer: Mary Woods

This collection of short pieces of Trish McBride's writing over the years is indeed a patchwork made up of stories, reports of events and activities, poetry, metaphor and academic essays. It is Trish's reflection on her life and her exploration of the nature of God. She builds a picture of the Church of her childhood, and of the breadth of her spiritual involvement through adulthood. She takes us through leaving the Church and finding that "God is in the other place."

I found Trish at her best as pilgrim. She talks of a pilgrimage being "...a journey with spiritual intent, ideally communal, taking us outside our comfort zones". Her Goddess Pilgrimage in Crete was such a journey. As she travelled, she explored the relationship between the ancient Cretan understanding of the Goddess and her understanding of the feminine in the Christian God. She was left with questions to be explored and pondered: Is Mary Goddess?

The two articles with most depth in them were written for the Catholic Institute of Theology. One explores forgiveness and examines the effect of the expectation to forgive in situations where people are marginalised, traumatised or are victims of continuing abuse. She concludes this with the challenging question: "Can moving from simplistic and universal recommendations to forgive, to a greater understanding of the lived

experience of traumatised victims, mark an increase in pastoral wisdom and usefulness?"

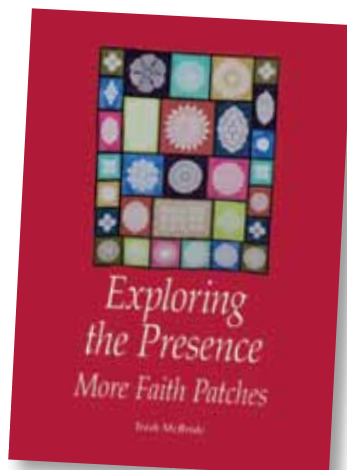
In the other article she seeks to validate the feminine images of God. Christian Scriptures as well as other traditions contain no shortage of feminine images of the Divine, but they are usually overwhelmed by the metaphor of a male hierarchical God. The underlying impression I got from this article was that the exclusion of the feminine in God had left Trish feeling rejected by the Church that she had been born into, been shaped by and worked for. Many Catholic women resonate with this feeling. Some like Trish have left their Church, others are still in the pews hoping for better

times to come.

These three patches are made of cloth of gold embroidered with loose threads for readers to pick up and explore for themselves.

I imagine the earlier pieces in this book are there to help build the picture of Trish's journey, but some of these failed to grip me. A few of the reports of events and travels were so summarised that they left me feeling that I didn't quite get the message. The metaphors were probably very powerful tools in self-reflection and therapy but they fulfil their purpose for the writer in the process of writing and don't translate well for the general reader. She says in her preface "As with traditional quilts, some patches are older unused fragments, others are fabric collected more recently." I think this would have been a better book if the patches had been selected more carefully and some had been expanded to give more information to the reader.

Despite this, Trish's book expresses eloquently the deep hurt experienced by many women who cannot relate to the concept of being made in the image of a powerful male God. These voices must be heard. ■



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shabbiness overcome by grace?

Barney's Version

Director: Richard Lewis

Reviewer: Mike Riddell

Can obnoxious people still find love and dignity? Is there a form of human grace that can finally overcome a life marked by shabbiness and self-obsession? The story of Barney Panofsky, located vividly in Montreal's Jewish community, explores such themes with both humour and dignity.

An adaptation of a novel of the same name by Mordecai Richler, *Barney's Version* is a delightful misfit of a film. Paul Giamatti (*Sideways*) pulls off a difficult feat in portraying Barney; a man it's hard to feel sympathy for, yet possessing enough heart that a gorgeous woman (Rosamund Pike) would fall in love with him.

The film is a thinly veiled reflection on Richler's own life, which in the novel is neatly divided into three sections to coincide with each of his marriages. The first is to a bohemian siren who taunts Barney by sleeping with all his friends. Next up is a Jewish socialite from a good family, neurotic as hell and living to shop.

Unfortunately for the hapless Barney, it's at the wedding party following his second marriage that he falls head over heels for Miriam, a guest of the bride. As we see her across the room through his eyes, she has a simply dazzling beauty. Barney pursues her relentlessly, and after finally entrapping his second wife into adultery with a woefully addicted friend of his, is clear to marry Miriam.

We discover that she is not only beautiful on the outside, but a person of sweet and forgiving temperament. Barney is rude, prejudiced, jealous and unreliable – covering these faults with a sharp tongue and a great sense of humour. Suffice it to say that his television production company is known as



Totally Unnecessary Productions.

In a classic tragedy, Barney is finally undone by his own faults, and loses that which is most precious to him — his beloved Miriam. The pain brings a final clarity that enables him to understand what a life full of betrayal, manipulation and selfishness he has led. In this broken honesty, it becomes at last possible to feel some genuine empathy for him.

This is a film that revels in beautifully portrayed idiosyncratic characters, and helps us both to realise the limits of our humanity and yet rejoice in the beauty of it at the same time. Dustin Hoffman, as Barney's father Izzy, is a marvellous mix — an outlandish

Jewish retired cop who dies triumphantly in a brothel. The love between Izzy and his son is a robust and compassionate view of fatherhood.

Barney's Version should make us give thanks for Canadian filmmakers. On paper the movie shouldn't work, and Hollywood would never have touched it. It's overpopulated with characters and laden with so many themes that it's impossible to slot.

But that of course is the genius and originality of the film. It's a story that's difficult to come away from without feeling more forgiving of your own foibles, and recognising the need for being both known and loved. ■

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Crosscurrents

Jim Elliston

World gone Gaga?

What attributes do Mother Teresa and Lady Gaga share, and why are they role models for corporate leaders? A June Economist article, based on two recent books by business academics, outlines three components: they developed clear brands identifying them with 'outsiders', they worked hard, they were brilliant communicators.

Teresa cast her lot with those rejected by society, Gaga describes herself as a freak, a lost soul, and assures her fans it's OK to be odd (e.g. reassuring to those of minority sexual orientations — and teenagers). Both are noted for spending long hours pursuing their widely divergent goals. Teresa was noted for her ability to speak to people at all levels of society in an easily understood manner, while Gaga is one of the first pop stars to have built her career through the internet and social media.

Lady Gaga "possesses leadership projection, or charisma, because she tells three universal stories". First, a personal one: who am I? (a misfit at school); second, a group one: who are we? (the marginalized); third, a collective mission: where are we going? (to be an equal part of society).

In May the Jesuit magazine America published several comments from Master of Theology students regarding their take on Lady Gaga. A typical example: "While the church claims a tradition of unconditional love and integrated ritual practice, the explosive fandom of Lady Gaga reveals a big pastoral deficit in the way we practice love and acceptance, especially for those continually marginalized by church and society. One would hope our efforts to understand, celebrate and love would be so provocative".

It is not only corporate leaders who should take note.

Israel's Ambassador Stumbles

While presenting a medal of Righteous Among Nations in memory of a priest for his outstanding assistance to Jews in Nazi-occupied Rome, Israel's Ambassador to the Holy See, Mordechai Lewy, said: "From the day of the round-up in the Rome ghetto on October 16, 1943, and the days that followed, monasteries and orphanages run by religious orders opened their doors to Jews and we have reason to believe that this happened under the supervision of the highest levels of the Vatican, who were therefore informed of these actions; it would therefore be a mistake to state that the Catholic Church, the Vatican and the Pope himself opposed efforts to save the Jews".

The Israeli line has always been that it was individual Catholics, acting independently of the Vatican, who gave assistance.

The following day Lewy issued the following clarification: "Praising the good deeds of Don Piccinini was embedded in a larger historical context. Given the fact that this context is still under the subject of ongoing and future research, passing my personal historical judgement on it was premature."

US and Afghanistan

Barack Obama, well before declaring his intention to run for President, declared in 2002 he opposed the war in Iraq. However, he went on: "I am not opposed to all wars; I'm opposed to dumb wars." Internal politics made it impossible for him as President to withdraw from Iraq because of a widespread belief that a pre-emptive strike is a legitimate defence — in this case, against Iraq's supposed intention to attack the US. By switching attention to

Afghanistan (accused of hosting the leaders of Al Qaeda) he made it easier to defend right wing accusations that he was "weakening the US in the eyes of the world".

Like the Russians before them, a majority of Americans have now realized that US adventurism is not without huge financial cost, so the political tide is turning. Withdrawal from Afghanistan is about to begin.

There is a basic structural problem that must be addressed before real lasting progress can be made. Military action cannot achieve this, and creates a negative context for humanitarian assistance. Our troops have done very productive work there, but to me it seems rather like refurbishing an office in a condemned building in Christchurch's red zone. Sabotage is a realistic prospect once they leave.

A Cardinal Stumbles

The Bishop of Toowoomba was recently deposed, in part it seems, because he was open to the idea of ordaining women "provided that it became Church policy". (Pope John Paul II had decreed that the matter must not be discussed.)

In an interview at the end of June the Patriarch of Lisbon, Cardinal Policarpo, said that there is no fundamental theological obstacle; it is a matter of Church tradition since the time of Jesus. However, he said, it is not the opportune time to raise the matter. But it will be settled "in God's good time".

Although he has reached the usual retirement age for bishops, Benedict XVI recently confirmed Polycarpo in office for another two years. He is regarded as a moderating influence between progressives and conservatives. He subsequently issued a clarification: "I am not in favour of ordaining women". ■

the price of milk

Robert Consedine

On 1 April 1823 my ancestor Thomas Sweeney was sentenced to hang in Tipperary for being active in a guerrilla group engaged in a struggle against the payments of tithes by poor farmers through striking at landlords or their agents. His execution was subsequently commuted to transportation for life.

Ireland is known historically as the cradle of colonisation. Absentee English landlords colonised Ireland, imposed vicious taxes and ruthlessly stole the land from the common people.

By the 1840s, despite a history of uprisings, Ireland was controlled by the English colonisers who regulated every aspect of Irish life. The Irish had no rights and were about to experience one of the greatest man-made humanitarian crimes in history – the Irish potato famine.

While the people starved in the name of political economy, Ireland exported massive amounts of grain, pork, bacon, butter, ham, sheep, wheat and oats to England. Ships full of food for export were leaving Ireland under armed guard alongside ships full of starving refugees. Free trade was sacrosanct. The British Government refused to intervene.

Charles Trevelyan, Permanent Secretary of the British Treasury in

1846, stated: 'Even limited interference by the Government would disturb the natural balance of supply and demand. The natural adjustments which take place under a system of perfectly free trade are always more than sufficient to counteract any inconvenience arising from such a system.'

Ireland lost about 2.8 million people over 15 years through starvation or emigration. Over one million starved to death.

The very same economic system which condemned millions of Irish to death by starvation in the 19th century was inflicted on New Zealanders by a Labour Government from 1984.

The price of the food we produce and purchase in New Zealand, including milk, cheese, fruit and vegetables, is set by the world market. Tens of thousands of New Zealanders can no longer afford the basic produce grown in this country while it is exported to the dinner tables of the elite around the world.

In the last 20 years the growth of inequality in New Zealand has been greater than in any other developed country. A recent OECD report shows that New Zealand is one of the most unequal nations in the OECD with an income gap wider than 21 of the 30 developed countries. The social consequences are horrendous.

The business and political elites are

clearly not interested. Governments no longer act on behalf of the people who elect them. The price of milk symbolizes this indifference.

Fonterra Chief Executive Andrew Ferrier, echoing Trevelyan, says "Government intervention would be an astonishing back step for New Zealand. Every aspect of our international trade policies is around free markets. It would be a massive step back to the dark ages." He is in no danger. The National Government and Labour opposition are wedded to this inequitable system.

These dysfunctional free markets have been a disaster for the world. Millions have lost their jobs and life savings and many starve as benefits are cut while taxpayers bail out banks, finance companies and the corporate world.

Yet all is well with the business elite and their political friends who have kept their religious belief in the 'free market' intact. Poverty is not on their radar, nor do they take personal responsibility for the consequences of their policies.

Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, said decades ago 'all our problems come from our acceptance of this filthy rotten system.'

We ignore the lessons of history at our peril. Yet the only thing we appear to learn from history is that we learn nothing from history. ■

Robert Consedine

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Learning from snails

Robin Kearns

A few years back I was leading our local 'walking school bus' one morning. Two boys were holding up proceedings, leaning into overhanging bushes and reluctant to walk on. "Come on guys...we need to get to school, what's with the bushes?" I called. "We're looking at snails" said one. "We never knew snails could climb trees", said the other. Today's kids, tomorrow's civil engineers! Lesson: slow down when there are snails around.

I've been stopped in my tracks by snails again recently. Mid-winter is snail heaven at our place. On damp nights, they're out socialising on the weatherboard walls. During long dark nights they carve a lattice of holes through the cabbage leaves in our vegetable garden. I even found a snail inside the house recently. Over dinner I asked. The answer was 'no', no one let it in. A mystery! Perhaps the visit was for a reason?

And then I was at home one morning and heard an interview on *Nine to Noon* with Elisabeth Tova Bailey. She was talking about snails. On the day, I didn't catch why, but it had something to do with her being very sick and watching one. So I ordered a copy of her book and a few snail sightings later, it arrived.

The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating is an engaging read that is part memoir of being seriously ill and part appreciation of a much-maligned creature. Most of all it celebrates a relationship between the author and a snail that arrives into her room, within view of her sickbed. Of course it's doubtful that the snail was aware of the author, but to her there was a connection. She was intrigued by its beauty, felt a sense of wonder at its abilities, and found consolation in the knowledge she was not alone. To Bailey, "the tiny, intimate sound of

the snail's eating gave me a distinct feeling of companionship and shared space... the snail and I were both living in altered landscapes not of our choosing".

Not long after finishing this book, I found myself in hospital. Nothing serious, but serious enough to be immobilised by discomfort. The funny thing is, I thought of snails. And while tied down by tubes and medical routines it occurred to me: you must be patient to be a patient. To be anything but what you're called to be in life just doesn't work. Just like the snail. It must be what it must be: a slow achiever in a world of speed.

I've since decided I never liked cabbages much anyway, and certainly not served as they are in hospital. So down in the garden, I'm now sharing neat rows of cabbages with snails, seeing what patterns they carve into my attempts at order. I may feel differently by spring. But for now, like Elisabeth Tova Bailey, snails are teaching me:

- Wonder (growing mystical spirals on their backs).
- Mystery (many underfoot teeth, magically extending eyes).
- Stillness (waiting through sunny days in vigil for rain).
- Self-sufficiency (no expensive real estate for them: just a back-pack's worth of protection from the sun).
- The value of legacy (treading lightly, but leaving a shimmering path others can follow).

This winter, I shall pray for forgiveness if there's the crunch of a snail beneath my shoe. And I will never again be dismissive of someone who moves "at a snail's pace". ■

Kaaren Mathias is on holiday this month.

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